

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHBURY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 14th OCTOBER 2024 AT
7:30PM AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM, RUSHBURY VILLAGE HALL**

101. WELCOME

Cllr Richards welcomed everyone to the meeting of Council.

102. PRESENT

Cllrs A Richards – Chairman, M Lowndes – Vice Chairman, Dr C Stevenson, A Dixon, E Riley, R Madeley

Clerk N Green.

Jenny Hartley – Member of Public - to accept Office of Parish Councillor.

Fleur Turner – Member of Public - to accept Office of Parish Councillor.

103. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr P Bodimeade sent apologies.

104. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

None declared.

105. PUBLIC SESSION

None present.

106. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024

It was proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Lowndes that the minutes of the meeting be adopted, it was resolved that the Chairman sign them as a true record.

107. ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Clerk reviewed the actions from the previous meeting as follows:-

The Clerk reported that no update had been received regarding the Longville Arms enforcement (Action – await update from SC).

The Clerk reported the Risk Assessment review was ongoing (Action Open).

The Clerk reported the HSBC review was ongoing (Action Open).

The Clerk reported he had sent an invitation to Shropshire Hills Landscape trust for the November meeting – response awaited (Action Open).

The Clerk reported he had sent a response to Atlas Tower and further contact was awaited (Action Closed).

The Clerk reported he had responded to Planning applications 24/03158/FUL and 24/03425/TCA (Action Closed).

The Clerk reported he had sent a further email regarding the traffic sign in Longville. He stated a response had been received and it had been forwarded to the highways technician. A further response is awaited (Action Open).

108. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

It was proposed by Cllr Lowndes and seconded by Cllr Dixon that Jenny Hartley and Fleur Turner are co-opted onto the Council. Both accepted the Office of Parish Councillor and all the relevant documentation was signed. There are no longer any vacancies on the Council.

109. CHAIRMANS REPORT

Cllr Richards informed the Council that he had received some positive feedback from Parishioners concerning the new speed indicator locations.

Cllr Richards stated that he had a meeting with Mr Glen Lovelock from South Shropshire Highways department in East Wall concerning flooding and drainage matters he had reported. Mr Lovelock had arranged for a tanker and jetter to attend and clear the area. Cllr Richards considered that it was positive that Mr Lovelock wanted to meet so they could discuss the issues. Mr Lovelock informed Cllr Richards that they were very short of funding and urged Parishioners to do whatever they can themselves (providing it was safe to do so). He also stated that Parishioners should report issues via 'fix my street' otherwise they will not be looked at. He clarified that it was a landowners responsibility to cut back any hedgerows that are obstructing road signs, etc.

Action – Clerk to highlight this issue in the HoneyPot.

110. CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk reported that Hugo Fox had contacted the Parish Council to state that they are now certified to provide .gov.uk domains and emails for Parish Councils. The domains will be provided free of charge but there is a cost for emails. The Cllrs instructed the Clerk to progress the domain issue but did not want to expend monies on email addresses.

Action – Clerk to progress .gov.uk domain

The Clerk reported that West Mercia Police had contacted the Parish Council to ascertain what the Policing Priorities are for the next six months. A number of options had been provided. The Cllr's considered these and decided that Anti- Social Driving, Speeding and Farm Thefts would be the priorities.

Action – Clerk to respond to WMP.

The Clerk highlighted an email had been received from Shropshire Council stating that the 'Exploring Future Options discussion' had been suspended due to the complexity of the matter. Cllr Lowndes stated that the Council wouldn't be able to justify increasing the precept money and distributing it to maintain services.

The Clerk reported that an email had been received from Shropshire Council concerning the development of tree initiatives. Cllr Lowndes stated that they should send anything of interest that could be considered.

Action – Clerk to respond.

111. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION 24/03803/LBC

This application is linked to 24/03158/FUL which has now been granted. The Cllr's decided a response was not required given a response was provided to the FUL application.

APPLICATION 24/03158/FUL and 24/02378/FUL

Cllrs noted that these applications had now been granted permission.

112. SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Motley was unavailable for the meeting, however, she sent a report which was read out, as follows:

*Report for Rushbury Parish Council
October 2024
Cllr Cecilia Motley
Corvedale Division*

Green Waste Bins

The Council has had some 50,000 requests for Green Waste Bins collection at £56 per bin per annum. The service was due to start this October but you may have heard that the company commissioned to produce the stickers to go on the green bins failed to make them sticky enough and they fell off. As a result they will not be paid for their efforts (or lack of them). The stickers have been recommissioned from another company that has demonstrated its super-adhesive abilities. The upside of this slightly sorry saga is that residents who have opted into paying for their green bin will get an extra month's grace of free collections until the scheme is rolled out from 4th November. Once the stickers arrive they should be put on the back of the bin (below the handle) so they are easily legible to the bin men. If you subscribed on behalf of someone else and forgot to include their email address, please send it to Shropshire Council.

With regard to green bins in churchyards, these have to be paid for but can be added to the system on request and applicants should email waste.management@shropshire.gov.uk for information. If there is no postbox for the delivery of a sticker, SC can arrange another delivery address.

Devolution

The Government wants to continue the previous government's move towards devolved local authorities with mayoralities introduced in the same way as some of the large urban areas such as Birmingham and Greater Manchester. This poses a problem for Shropshire as a large rural authority with a relatively small population, no large cities and a higher than average population of over-65s and over-85s. Shropshire's Leader, Lezley Picton has had a long conversation with the new leader of Telford & Wrekin Council. Nothing is ruled in or out but it is more likely that Telford would wish to join the West Midlands Combined Authority, which is not such an attractive proposition for Shropshire. Our Leader will therefore hold talks with Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire to see if there are enough synergies to make a combined authority look viable. The Police & Crime Commissioner, John Campion, is advocating a possible devolution deal based on the West Mercia authorities (which includes Shropshire). No-one is sure how far this has developed yet.

You may have heard that Shropshire Council has decided it needs to move from Shirehall to the Guildhall at Frankwell in Shrewsbury. The Shirehall currently is not fit for purpose: it has three floors which aren't used at all and is horrendously expensive to run (and heat, as all the windows are single skinned and let in draughts). Due to the fact that since Covid many staff work part time at home or in the market towns; and that the building was originally designed to accommodate 4,500 people and now has nearer 200 working there regularly, it is becoming very uneconomic.. Nevertheless there has been considerable push-back, not least from the Save our Shirehall group and the Shrewsbury Civic Society. However, needs must and the plan is to start vacating the building before Christmas and complete the move by February.

Last week I had a meeting with Derek Buchanan, Andy Wilde (AD in charge of Highways) Dan Morris (Cabinet Member for Highways) and Rob Macey (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Digital) to discuss the increasing demand for VAS signs and the rules that should apply to setting them up. Despite demand for VAS signs there is still confusion about who is responsible for what. The situation was further confused by an intervention from NALC querying the parishes' role in setting up VAS signs and whether they should be allowed to erect them round the parishes without Highways sign off.

The upshot of the meeting was that Derek Buchanan has been asked to come back with a set of rules for parishes to follow, acknowledging that there is an increasing demand for traffic calming measures and that most parishes are using some of their CIL Neighbourhood fund together with PCC funding to obtain VAS signs and put them up themselves.

Finally, the Council is still fighting its way through a very difficult financial situation. We have had a voluntary redundancy programme running for a while now and are likely to lose some 350 officers, Inevitably this will have an effect on service delivery, but we will do our best to mitigate gaps in services. I will keep you up to date with our situation as it progresses.

113. FINANCIALS

The following list of accompanying invoices were reviewed, Members also received the latest bank reconciliation (Sep) which brought the accounts to the 30th Sep 2024 to £15,578.04. All documents will be signed off by the Chairman and it was **RESOLVED** to authorise these payments to be made.

REF	DESCRIPTION	STATUTES	Account
1	Groundworks	HA1980 S.96	£367.89
2	IT data backup	LGA 1972 S.111	£7.20
3	Clips Speed Signs	LGA 1972 S.111	£37.00

114. CORRESPONDENCE

A Parishioners letter from Gail Robinson was discussed concerning the level of support from Rushbury Parish Council towards Church Stretton Town Council to maintain the library and Leisure centre facilities. Cllrs noted that SC had now suspended the potential option of Parish Councils providing financial assistance to support services.

115. COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Cllr Dixon stated that a decision on the Ploughs appeal should be made this week.

Cllr Dixon stated that the Rushbury Village Hall committee are doing a lot of work concerning the improvement of the hall's energy efficiency. He also stated that the pop up pub continues to be successful.

116. PARISH MATTERS

Cllr Stevenson said that a Parishioner had contacted him concerning the stolen letter box from outside the Plough Inn in Wall under Heywood. Apparently, the alternative letter box in Rushbury is Victorian and too small for some items.

Action – The Clerk was asked to write to the Post Office to clarify if it was being replaced.

Cllr Stevenson said that Lushcott Lane was an absolute mess at the moment due to the weather. Cllr Hartley stated that there is an ongoing dispute regarding what authority has responsibility for the road but the matter had been reported by fix my street.

Cllr Stevenson stated that a ditch had appeared on Stone Acton Lane and it could be dangerous to traffic. Cllr Turner stated that the ditches had been cleared to prevent flooding.

117. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Cllr Stevenson stated that the precept budget should be included.

118. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for 7.30 pm on the 18th November 2024 at the Committee Room, Rushbury Village Hall.

Cllr A Richards thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Please note that the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust will be invited to attend at 7.00pm.

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Chairman

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Date

These minutes will remain in draft format until signed by the Chairman as a true record.